

# JERSEY BEAT

A JOURNAL OF INFORMED OPINION AND THOUGHT



Whatever  
Happened  
to

**HARDCORE**

**SELVES**



IN THIS ISSUE...

**PUNK  
TEEN**

bonus  
'zine!

VOL. IV NO. V  
ISSUE # 23  
OCTOBER/NOV. '85



# JERSEY BEAT

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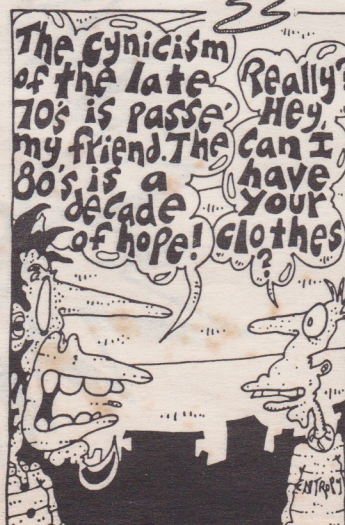
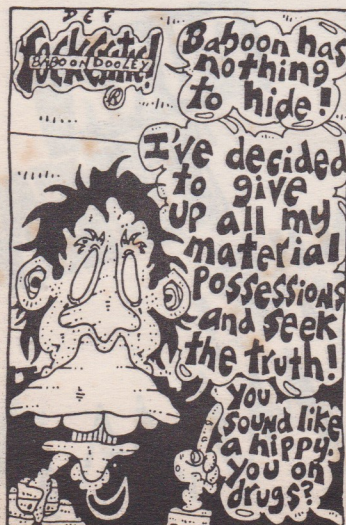
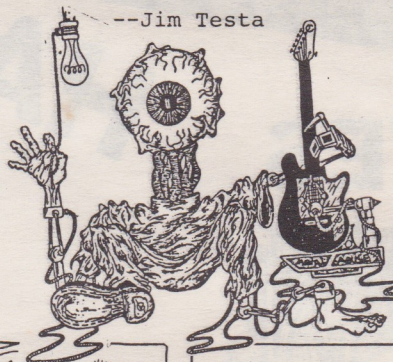
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Jersey Beat		
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- USA -		

The question posed on our cover is, of course, largely rhetorical. Hardcore is still around and, arguably, stronger than ever. In our area, the music and the slam-happy kiddie punks who support it have found a home at Trenton's City Gardens and the Rock Hotel, the Showplace in Dover and the venerable CBGB matinees. In this issue, we tell you where to find hardcore on the radio and on the burgeoning 'zine front, and present an interview with one of the local scene's best 'n brightest. And then there's a look at what might be called Post-Hardcore - records by bands finding new and different ways of being fast 'n loud: Sonic Youth, Dinosaur, the Mad Daddys, Mission of Burma, and so on. And just 'cos it seemed like fun, we debut PUNKTEEN, an alternative hardcore 'zine for folks too old to slamdance and too young for Easy Listening. Hey, one thing we've learned 'round here - ain't nothing easy in this life, especially listening for great new sounds...

--Jim Testa



## STAFF MEETING! JERSEY BEAT IN "THIS MONTH'S COVER"

SO, WHAT SHOULD WE PUT ON THE COVER THIS ISSUE?



I'VE GOT IT! A FULL-COLOR COLLAGE OF SKULLS AND SWASTIKAS, WITH A BUNCH OF YELLOW & ORANGE ANTI-REAGAN SYMBOLS!



OKAY THEN, HOW ABOUT JUST SLAPPING ON SOME PHOTOS & NAMES OF BANDS THAT ARE IN THE ISSUE?



THAT'S IT!!





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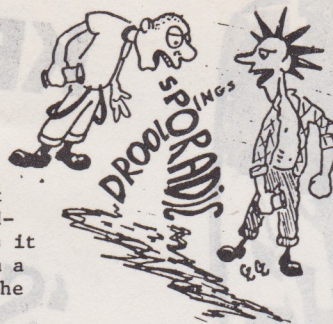
WLFR 91.7 FM  
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FM Chaos  
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## 'ZINE OF THE MONTH

SPORADIC DROOLING  
P.O. Box 1092  
Kearny, NJ 07032 \$1

Issue #3 is 80 pages (!) of interviews, reviews, photos, cartoons, etc. etc., mostly but not exclusively related to hardcore. Editor Dave Burokas does it almost all himself, so drop him a line, get an issue, and start the Drooling habit!



RELIGION  
and  
POLITICS

DO THEY  
MIX?



# zines

MAXIMUM ROCK N ROLL  
Box 288, Berkeley CA 94701 \$1  
Scene reports from all over, lots of bands, international scope, and very conscientious about printing addresses so you can contact all these folks. Published pretty regularly, too.

FLIPSIDE  
Box 363, Whittier, CA 90608 \$1  
Actually, I prefer Flipside to Maximum - it's less political, more band-oriented - but they don't publish regularly anymore. Still, a great read when a new one comes out.

THE BIG TAKEOVER  
249 Eldridge St. #14, NYC, NY 10002  
Jack Rabin's encyclopedic xeroxed newsletter, now encompassing all manner of "music with heart." 75c and a SASE.

D.O.V.E.  
POBox 4-1698, Anchorage, AK 99509 \$1  
Great skatepunk zine from Alaska (!), lots of gnarly graphix (those Alaskan kids can draw!) and good articles.

WARNING  
Box 102993, Anchorage AK 99510 \$1  
More skatepunk stuff from Alaska but they don't publish too often anymore. Worthwhile if you can get one.

INK DISEASE  
4563 Marmion Way, L.A., CA 90065 \$1  
A strong contender for Maximum's #1 H-C zine status. Photos, intv'ws, reviews, & nicely printed.

SUB-9  
12246 Montanta Av. L.A., CA 90049 \$1  
Lots of great art & hardcore features in this zine from L.A.

POWER FOR LIVING  
2521 Irving Ave. So.  
Minneapolis, MN 55405 \$1  
Lots of great Minneapolis zines, this is my fave. The latest one had a Das Damen cover story, intv'd on their tour.

TSE TSE FLY  
601B Surf Ave. #17L  
Brooklyn NY 11224 50c  
Lots of cool art & photos.

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## SUBURBAN UPRISING: The Jersey Beat Compilation

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"Girls" - FROZEN CONCENTRATE  
"Attitude" - BANDABLES  
"She Might Look My Way" - PAID VACATION  
"Flowers Through The Air" - TINY LIGHTS  
"You've Been Hangin' Round" - MOD FUN  
"Things We'll Never Say" - WINDBREAKERS  
"Love You" - ALTER BOYS  
"Without You (I'm Not)" - IN COLOR

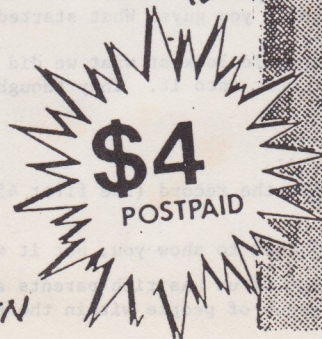
THE PUNK SIDE  
"Suburbia" - ADRENALIN O.D.  
"Step Upside Down" - LORD JOHN  
"Witch Doctor Blues" - SWINGERS  
"Amerika" - PLEASED YOUTH  
"Sacred Denial" - SACRED DENIAL  
"Never" - DISTURBED  
"Problem Song" - LOVE PUSHERS  
"Waiting For The Beat" - DAS DAMEN  
"Idols & Dolls" - SKULLS  
"Jive In Jersey" - PUNTERS

BANDABLE

Swingers  
DAS DAMEN

ADRENALIN  
H.O.D.

frozen  
concentrate







# KRAUT SEZ, 'SLOW DOWN!'

by Jim Testa

Kraut remains one of the most popular - if misunderstood - hardcore bands on the NY/NJ scene. Their searing blend of punk and metal, Davey Gunner's forceful lead vocals, and Johnny Feedback's manic drumming combine to rank them among the most exciting live acts around, and their two LPs - 1983's An Adjustment To Society and last year's Whetting The Scythe - combine Doug Holland's sledgehammer riffs with the precision team of Feedback and bassist Don Cowan for a power-punk onslaught that's undeniably effective.

And yet, within "the scene" that supposedly nurtures and protects its best and brightest, Kraut has always had problems. The local CBGB punkoisie suffers from a long-standing resentment of Kraut's immediate successes, and the band's forays into video - making them the first hardcore band with a video on MTV's rotation - have encouraged cries of "Sellout!" from their peers. What's the real story? We spoke to Kraut about some of these things last Spring (and apologize to the band for the long time it's taken for this interview to appear).

First, for the record, Kraut is a five-piece; besides the four musicians, there is Ryk Oakley, the band's producer, guru, counselor, financial manager, and big brother. Oakley has been with the band since its first gig (more on that later. The interview was conducted at the video studio where Don Cowan works.

**Jersey Beat:** A lot of your reviews, by some very influential writers, say that the band is getting away from the strictly 'hardcore' image you've had in the past. Do you think that's true?

**Don Cowan:** Our audience is still hardcore. But it seems like the kids are appreciating our new style. It's just what we feel, and that's always what we've done. We never consciously set out to 'be' anything. When we started, we were a hardcore band, but we didn't know it. What did we know from 'hardcore'? We were just four kids sitting around listening to the Sex Pistols back in Queens.

**Ryk Oakley:** I know that at our last gig, the hardcore kids were there, sure, but there seemed to be a lot of other people, people who weren't necessarily into hardcore but were just there because they were curious, because they had heard about the band and wanted to check it out. And I know a lot of the reviews we've gotten for the record have talked about that, about the combination of punk and metal breaking out of the old mold, you know.

**Don:** Still, nothing has changed as far as the shows go.

**Doug Holland:** All we've really changed is our own playing ability. A lot of getting better over the years is just getting real good at knowing each other. Like, after a while, you just have to know when Davey is gonna burp or when Johnny is gonna fall off his drumkit, stuff like that.

**Johnny Feedback:** I'm not playing anything different from before, just a lot better, a lot crisper and tighter.

**Jersey Beat:** Let's talk about your reputation within the hardcore scene. I've always liked you as a band but I always had other people bad-mouthing you guys. What started that?

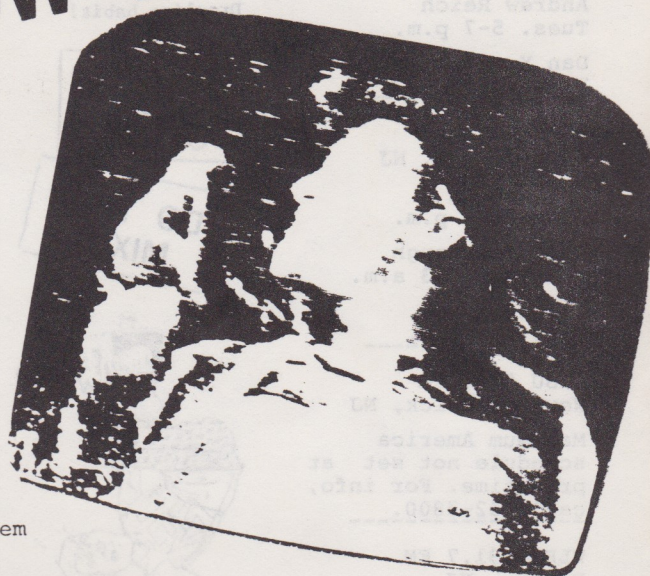
**Doug:** We worked too hard. People would look at what we did and what we got to do and say, 'How'd they do that?' and not see all the hard work that went into it. They thought it was just heaven-sent, handed to us on a platter, and it wasn't, not ever.

**Don:** What was it, New York Rocker...

**Doug:** Yeah, they didn't even review the record (the first 45, "Unemployed"), the review just talked about our rich parents and stuff.

**Ryk:** Yeah, I wish I had a copy of that to show you, but it was like, 'Snotty little rich kids...'

**Doug:** And none of it was true. None of us has rich parents and we've never gotten money from anybody. A lot of that talk came from a certain group of people within the scene just going out of their way to say bad things about us.





# KRAUT

Don: From our first gig, though, there was this resentment. [Kraut's first-ever gig was opening for the Clash at Bond's Disco in 1981] And that was just a matter of me running up to Mick Jones and saying, 'Here, play my tape!' and he did and he liked it. That and me just bugging him and bugging him. And that's how we got that gig. And we took the money from that - what was it, like \$350, \$400 - and made the first single. So much for our rich parents...

Ryk: You know, that show was the first time Davey and Johnny ever played in front of a live audience. And that was the night I met those two. Donny called me up and said, 'Come down and do sound for us tonight' and that was the start of the whole thing.

Jersey Beat: Do you remember when that was?

All [simultaneously]: June 11, 1981.

Don [laughing]: We still have a party on that day and celebrate our anniversary every year. God, it's four years already!

That first gig set the pattern for Kraut's crazy rollercoaster career of successes and setbacks. From that first show - playing before thousands, opening for the Clash - the band settled into the usual hassle of landing gigs, usually winding up in tiny dumps like A7 and Hoboken's Mile Square City. The response to the first single landed them an album deal with Faulty Records, then run by impresario Miles Copeland. But despite a great album, An Adjustment To Society, the band found itself back at Square One when Faulty suddenly went out of business. "And they called us up and told us they were going to sell the remaining copies of our record, remainder them for, like, a dollar a pound or something," recalls Ryk. "So we had to buy back our own record from Faulty and then try to distribute it ourselves." That's when the band started Cabbage Records and built up its own distribution system.

The second album was released in conjunction with L.A.'s Enigma Records, but the band quickly found that all Enigma really offered was a chance to have the LP pressed for them. "We got no promotion, no advertising, no support, nothing," says Don. "We've had to do it all ourselves."

The videos came about thanks to Ryk and Don's connections within the industry, access to equipment, and "every spare dime we could scrape up out of our own pockets," says Don. The first Kraut video, "All Twisted," poked fun at hardcore's self-appointed censors, showing Gestapo-like policemen arresting not only the band but also a family watching the band's video on tv at home. Taking a line from their song "Onward" to heart - "You've gotta go backwards to go onward" - the boys picked the old Larry Williams rocker "Slow Down" at the showpiece from their second album. That video flip-flops between the band's contemporary h-c image and a Fifties record hop. While "Slow Down" has been shown on USA cable's Radio:1990 but has yet to crack MTV's rotation (as did "All Twisted"). Another step forward, another half-step back.

Still, things are looking up. Within New York's hardcore community, Kraut is one of the few groups to achieve headliner status; the band's 1985 shows have included the Ritz (opening for Husker Du), the Peppermint Lounge, the Rock Hotel, and a record release party at Danceteria. And finally, there are bands emerging from the hardcore scene on the national level and winning some recognition. "I feel really good that [Husker Du and the Replacements] have done so well," says Don. "At this stage, at least we can feel like maybe we're not just wasting our time."

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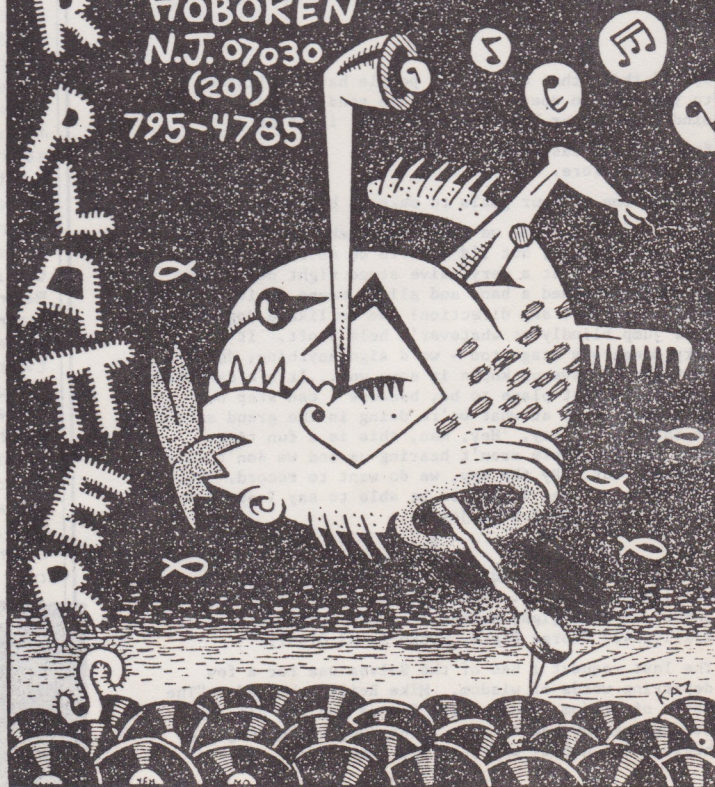
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PLATE





by Dawn Eden

"The Selves are doctors working on a cure for which there is no disease." I wish I made that up, but Mike and Paul of the Selves beat me to it.

A Selves performance finds the four band members going in four different directions as Mike Reilly, the guitarist and lead singer, lets the audience become witness to the music's taking over his body and making him shake to the beat. He sometimes plays so quickly that his strumming hand becomes a frenzied blur. The room fills with the Selves' sound and the music becomes a living mass, the bass line meshing with the heartbeat of the listener.

Late last month, I crowded into a car to interview all four Selves: Mike, Paul (guitar), George (drums), and Bruce (bass). Bruce has since left the group.

JB: How did you find each other?

Mike: Well, after years of singles bars...

Paul: Mike started the band.

Mike: Yeah, I started the band...

George: No, I started the band.

Mike: ... with George. We played with two other people, Dennis Mitchell and a girl. Dennis wanted to form his own band and we wanted to do our own stuff, so he went off and formed the New Breed. The girl went off and went to college in Florida, so we picked up a bass player who was a friend of George's. We were a threesome for a pretty long time. It was okay but we decided we wanted to fill out our sound and I saw Paul...I liked the way he played and very nonchalantly asked him if he wanted to play with us. He said, 'Sure,' so we had him. Then Kenny (the bass player) kind of left...

JB: What club did you play your first gig at?

George: The Dive.

Mike: The Dive was the one place that didn't give us a hassle about getting our first gig. They liked us and they always supported us.

JB: Someone told me you sounded like the Velvet Underground...It wasn't until the second song in your set that I could put that label behind and objectively see you're your own band.

Paul: So many people compare us to so many bands. We've been called the Kinks, the Jam, early Pink Floyd, just about everything.

JB: I think that definitely people have to listen to you with an open mind. People tend to, in their minds, make your band what they want it to be.

Bruce: It's easier to identify with something you've heard of before.

JB: Is one of your goals to make it big commercially?

Mike: I don't think we could ever make it really big commercially, but I'd like to be as big as possible. The Selves are at a very naive stage right now, where we've just formed a band and all we wanna do is move to some direction, any direction! We're like a dog that will jump blindly at whatever's held aloft. It's a very dangerous stage too - we'd sign anything, do anything to have us known in some way...It's a dangerous and a very neat place to be, because I can step out of myself, look at what we're doing in the grand scheme of things, and say, 'Hey, man, this is a fun time,' even though people aren't hearing us and we don't have a record out. By the way, we do want to record. But at the same time, I want to be able to say I enjoy what we're doing, and I do enjoy it.

\* \* \*

The Selves have picked up a new bassist and plan to resume playing out shortly. The band has a mail list which announces club gigs; anyone interested can write Mike Reilly, 439 George Place, Wyckoff, NJ 07481.

The last request I had of the Selves was for a few departing words of wisdom. Mike Reilly obliged: "The words of wisdom, good advice for us and for all struggling new bands, are: Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die first."



## Our Buddies, Our Selves

# NEWCOMERS ARE NEAT!

by Mike Stark

Sorry, true believers, but I'm not a big fan of heavy drugs. I mean, not that I ever really indulged or anything, but I know I would probably have worse trips than in a Roger Corman movie: Ray Milland, rats in the walls, technicolor road pizzas... AARRHGGH! Why go through all that agony? Why take drugs when you can go see the Optic Nerve?! These four long-legged, dark-haired, cool-shaded youths look like they stepped right out of *Psych-Out* or something, and the music they create could have been influenced by that flick's soundtrack. They jingle! They jangle! And they'll get you beating your hallucinatory tambourine (or whatever else you wild adolescents beat) in time. Look, I don't wanna start sounding like the liner notes to a Byrds' album, but these guys will have you swaying mindlessly as they raga up & down their fret boards. Ahh, the perfect drug: approved by the Board of Health, a board of rock critics, and a good trip guaranteed each time.

Ya might recognize a few of the Nerve's faces. Bobby (vocals & twang) was in The Purple Onion, Ira (drums & hair) is a former Fuzztone, Orin (bass) came outta the Outta Place, and Tony (lead guitar) has credits with both the Long Horns and Stinky & The Skunks [Who??? - Ed.] Ya might also recognize a few of their covers - from the rollicking "Quinn The Eskimo" to the slide guitar blues of "Aint It Hard." The Nerve also rarely repeats a set and will always have a few surprises in store. Gee, folks, from folk to fuzz...they're almost as unpredictable as the drugs they'll have you thinking you're on.

THE

# OPTIC NERVE

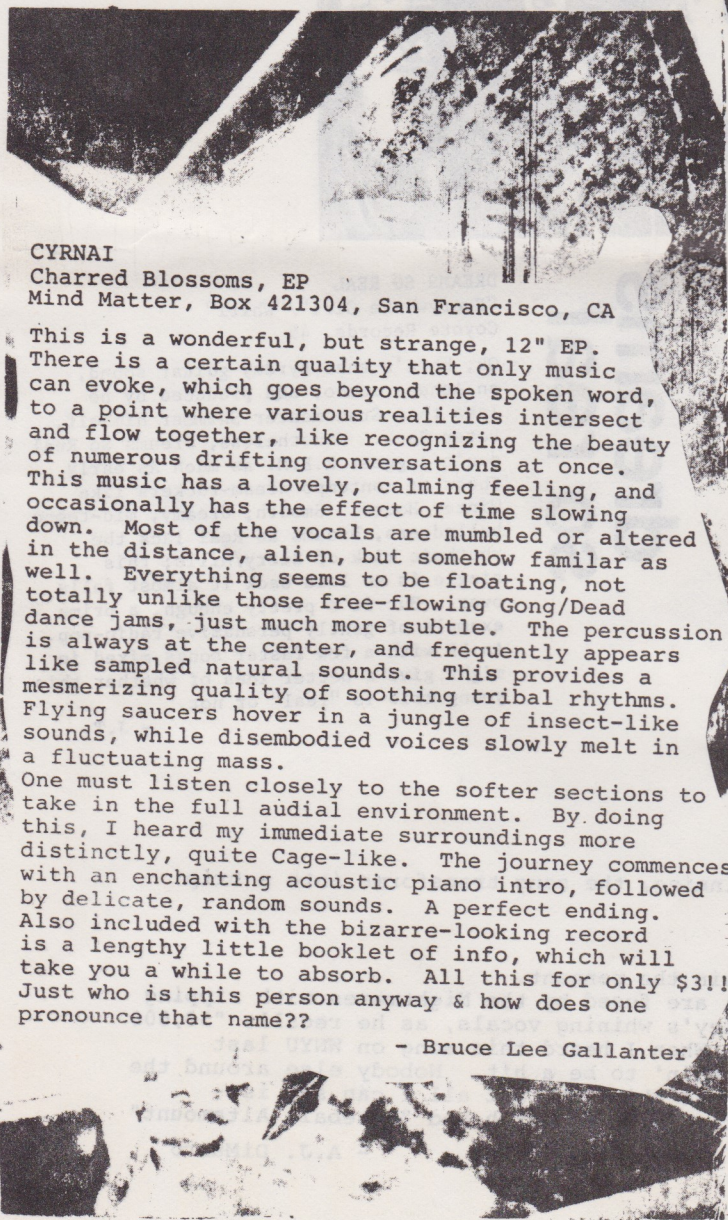


# POST-HARDCORE DANCE PARTY

DINOSAUR, LP  
Homestead Records

Amherst, MA's Dinosaur parlay a curious mix of influences into fascinating psychedelic noises. As lead singer J Mascis croons in a lazy Ray Davies drawl, his Big Muff-distorted guitar crackles and swirls in dense layers of fuzz and leads, often thickened by a mix of acoustic guitars and bass. Meanwhile, drummer Murph plays everything at breakneck hardcore tempo - even the "slow" songs - creating a tension between melody and rhythm section. Finally, this trio's fearless willingness to copy any musical idea that strikes their fancy - from Husker Du to the Feelies - lets them achieve new textures and combinations of classic rock n roll sounds. Labels? Forget it. If this is a noise band, how to explain the pretty acoustic guitars on "Forget The Swan"? And if this is a psychedelic combo, where does the raging metal/punk of "Mountain Man" fit in? Just buckle your seatbelt, jack up the sound, and enjoy the ride on this one.

- J.T.



CYRNAI

Charred Blossoms, EP  
Mind Matter, Box 421304, San Francisco, CA

This is a wonderful, but strange, 12" EP. There is a certain quality that only music can evoke, which goes beyond the spoken word, to a point where various realities intersect and flow together, like recognizing the beauty of numerous drifting conversations at once. This music has a lovely, calming feeling, and occasionally has the effect of time slowing down. Most of the vocals are mumbled or altered in the distance, alien, but somehow familiar as well. Everything seems to be floating, not totally unlike those free-flowing Gong/Dead dance jams, just much more subtle. The percussion is always at the center, and frequently appears like sampled natural sounds. This provides a mesmerizing quality of soothing tribal rhythms. Flying saucers hover in a jungle of insect-like sounds, while disembodied voices slowly melt in a fluctuating mass.

One must listen closely to the softer sections to take in the full aural environment. By doing this, I heard my immediate surroundings more distinctly, quite Cage-like. The journey commences with an enchanting acoustic piano intro, followed by delicate, random sounds. A perfect ending. Also included with the bizarre-looking record is a lengthy little booklet of info, which will take you a while to absorb. All this for only \$3!! Just who is this person anyway & how does one pronounce that name??

- Bruce Lee Gallanter

## PUNK



MUSIC FOR MEN, Mad Daddys  
PVC, LP

Given the Mad Daddys Cramps-damaged sound, and the fact that this EP was produced by Cramps Ivy and Lux, it's no surprise that Music For Men is pure gutbucket psychobilly. The surprise is how good this sounds! Lux & Ivy have given the Daddys a cleaner sound than their own records tend to have, but with the same heavy cave-stompin' beat and bayou twang. The lyrics, predictably, can be offensive in a goofy, non-malevolent sort of way; certainly, a song called "Cool Spook" isn't going to be copping any awards come National Brotherhood Week. But it's all meant in fun - you're supposed to believe these guys are too dumb to know any better - and if you crank this up at your next teen dance party, nobody's gonna be zeroing in on the words anyway. Cooool, daddy!

- J.T.

SONIC YOUTH, Death Valley '69 EP  
Homestead Records

When I encountered the first Sonic Youth long player, I was in the throes of a militant disinterest in anything connected with NYC's post-no wave avant-garde. Tepid funk 'n junk by-the-#'s as practiced by the Bush Tetras and ante-Contortions James White made the scene look like a bad in-joke perpetuated by cynical academics. It drove me to investigate the nascent hardcore scene and power-pop cranks - anything that seemed spontaneous, heartfelt, naive. Impulsive.

Bad Moon Rising and an explosive performance at the Pep early in '85 forced me to reconsider that position and I can see in retrospect that I had it all wrong. Traced by the cuts compiled on Death Valley '69, Sonic Youth appear to have followed a path of intuition and drastic passion the whole time.

"I Dreamed I Dream" from that first LP, Sonic Youth, effects a gentle dissonance; it's minimal but not monotone, a motoroil rainbow in a gutterside pool, rippled by a slight breeze. "Inhuman" off Confusion Is Sex is hard-charging rant - punk taken to a logical extreme of provocation. The Kill Yr Idols EP yields "Brother James," wherein they treat erstwhile patron Glenn Branca's classically tinged maximized minimalism to the same inquisitive irreverence that the Stooges lashed out at the Stones with.

The title cut and "Satan Is Boring" come from recent sessions. "Death Valley '69" is a reet catchy # rendered without benefit of immediately recognizable consonances or very much orthodox rock 'n roll structuring at all. It's taken from Bad Moon Rising and was also available as a shoddily mastered, badly pressed 45 on Iridescence. "Satan" is a case of willful misconduct. Slow, slimey, and effectively repulsive...in a good-natured sort of way; a resounding "Nyah!" to friends 'n foes alike.

Unaccounted for are the 2cool Sonic Death cassette (soon to be more widely available thru Dutch East India) and "Making The Nature Scene" 45 on Forced Exposure, which you should probably pick up too. Crazy!

- Howard Wuelfing



# REVIEWS

by Pattie Kleinke

CHURCHES, WINTER HOURS,  
EP, LINK RECORDS

A pretty vinyl debut from my favorite NJ band, and this time I'm not alone: I played the opening track, "Churches," for several kids in my office and got thumbs up from all. On American Bandstand, this would get a 95 'cos you can dance to it as well as listen to the subtle beauty of the lyrics, not to mention one of the great guitar lines of the year.

"Walk Away" has always been one of my all-time #1 WH songs. Here it builds, it ebbs, it flows like the Feelies and a certain Athens, GA band rolled into one.

"At A Turtle's Pace" is jangly, modern-day folk/rock for anyone into Big Star's ballads. At the risk of losing friends, I have no idea why the Hours did "All Along The Watchtower" here; no one is going to improve on Hendrix' and this version just sounds strained. The intention was nice but, in my opinion, this is one of Bobby Zimmerman's worst tracks. Joseph's vocal delivery does focus on the lyrical content of the song, which I had never done.

Live, this band packs a mini-wallop that doesn't really come across on vinyl. They can deliver pleasant surprises (like their energetic cover of Television's "See No Evil") and hopefully they will be touring extensively soon.

Currently, they are in the studio with their producer, the Bongos' Rob Norris (who's done their demos and this EP with them). In the meantime, pick this one up before it's a collector's item. Remember, the last time I went this gaga over now sells out Radio City and their indie vinyl debut is going for \$20!

## Winter Hours

## 'mares

THE NIGHTMARES  
"Baseball Altamount"  
Coyote Records, 45

From its apocalyptic beginning, the song transforms into a trip down Memory Lane.

The date: 1973

The place: Shea Stadium

The occasion: The Mets win the pennant.

Rock 'n roll and baseball are fused by the Nightmares with ripping guitars and Phillip Shelley's whining vocals, as he recalls "50,000 screaming fans at Shea." When I heard this song on WNYU last summer, I thought it was goin' to be a hit. Nobody else around the Jersey Beat offices seems to think so, but all I can say is - Music is the most catalytic force on earth and "Baseball Altamount" goes for the cycle.

- A.J. DiMurro

### TINY LIGHTS

"Flowers Through The Air"/"Zippity Doo Dah"  
1029 Washington St. Hoboken NJ 07030 \$2.50

The 'psychedelic' revival has given us all kinds of goodies over the past few years but few surpass the intricate beauty and delicate shadings of Tiny Lights' magical mystery tour of a single, "Flowers Through The Air." Starting with a non-existent audience applauding politely, the song blends Jane Scarpantoni's haunting cello, Donna Croughn's violin and vocals, and John Hamilton's carefully wrought lead guitar into a mini-rock rhapsody. Dave Dreiwitz' bass and John Mastro's drums (he's since left the group) complete the ensemble. "Flowers" builds into a soaring euphoric chorus fading into an "Eleanor Rigby" like decrescendo. A pop tour de force from this talented Hoboken combo. The flip side is one of their busy rock/pop numbers; maybe a little too busy. When Tiny Lights learns to contain their wealth of musical and rhythmic ideas in the right song structure, they'll be incomparable. Except maybe to the Beatles, a comparison most bands would die for.

- Jim Testa



## dreams so real

DREAMS SO REAL  
"Everywhere Girl"/"Whirl"  
Coyote Records, 45

Ok, here's that Byrdsy guitar sound, an Athens combo, and produced by no less than Grandmaster Shimmer himself, Peter Buck. Nonetheless, Dreams So Real don't suggest R.E.M. as much as early Shoes or contempo dream-rockers like Winter Hours. Smooth, dreamy, mid-tempo balladeers, Dreams So Real lack the rhythmic kick of Berry/Mills; this single is so laid back it almost falls over. But it's pretty enough, a prime example of gently persuasive radio-pop. An LP with a few faster songs mixed in might give a better idea of whether this young trio is "real" or not.

- J.T.



## Tiny Lights



by Pattie Kleinke

It was a homecoming of sorts for the Riff Doctors when they played Maxwells on September 20th - and they were thrilled to be "home." This version of the Docs, the best I've heard yet, features the core of founder Frank Bednash and ex-Cyclone Donna Esposito, with the addition of bassist Tom Shaderovsky and drummer Alan Bezozi.

During their set of mostly new material - they only missed one song from their Mitch Easter-produced, 1985 demo - Frank and Donna exchanged songs, guitar leads, and guitars. In face, the only older songs were a rousing version of their pop-heaven Coyote 45, "I Don't Wanna Go Back," and "Cindy."

I talked to the band a while back, just as they were recording their 6-song demo at Easter's Drive-In Studio, a project they still hope will be released by a local label. I asked them if having two songwriters in the band posed a problem.

Donna: It's fun for both of us. We both get to be the songwriter and up at the mike and then we both get to be the backup guitar player. For me it's a better situation than in the Cyclones 'cos it's more balanced.

"The new stuff," Frank added, "is gonna be more fun. Now I have Donna writing guitar solos on my songs that I never would have thought of, and vice versa. She writes lyrics better than I do. I tend to come up with melodies a lot."

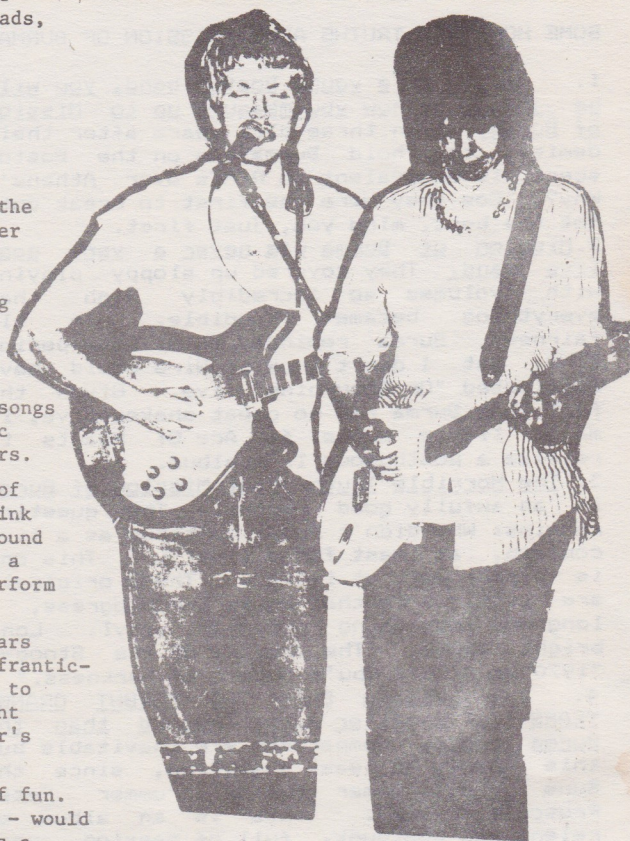
While the new songs show a maturity in both members' songwriting, they prove that you can get better without losing emotion and feeling. Each of the six songs on the tape have that breezy sound of rhythm guitars, whether they're electric or acoustic. Frank sez you can't have a good pop song without acoustic guitars.

New songs like "Set The World On Fire" and "She" rank up there with the best of Let's Active. "Say Goodbye" and "Reckless" are perfect Girl Group Pop. I think they all deserve to be hit singles. After all, hooks like these don't come around every day. "The Things That Made Me Glad I Met Her" is a mouthful; it's also a rockabilly rave-up and the one song from the new demo that the band didn't perform live.

I hope this version of the Riff Doctors sticks around for the next hundred years or so. In the past, the band has been prone to looooong hiatuses while Frank frantically looked for a new drummer or bassist. But this version of the band seems to be sticking it out. Tom's bass playing is amazing, filling in at all the right places. For a rhythm section that really hasn't had time to learn one another's idiosyncracies that well, these guys cook.

All in all, the Riff Doctors live, on tape, or just hanging around are lots of fun. What other band - wryly noting the fuss in Senate about censoring song lyrics - would encore with a great version of Twisted Sister's "We're Not Gonna Take It" - as a surf instrumental!?!  
Pop lives.

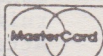
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by Jim DeRogatis

#### MISSION OF BURMA

The Horrible Truth About Mission of Burma  
Ace of Heart Records, LP

#### VOLCANO SUNS

The Bright Orange Years, Homestead, LP

#### SOME HORRIBLE TRUTHS ABOUT MISSION OF BURMA

1. If you're a young Boston band, you will be judged by how you measure up to Mission of Burma. Even three-plus years after their demise, the hold Burma has on the Boston scene is equivalent to REM's over Athens'. Why? 'Cos they were the first to break out. Not the best, mind you, just first.

2. Mission of Burma was never a very good live band. They covered up sloppy playing with volumes so incredibly high that everything became inaudible. In all fairness, Burma reminded me of late-period Wire, but I don't know if Wire could have duplicated "On Returning" live. Given the fact that Burma was no great shakes live, it makes little sense for Ace Of Hearts to release a posthumous live album.

3. The Horrible Truth About Mission of Burma is an awfully good record. The question remains: Why didn't Burma continue as a live concern, at least for a final LP? This one is a poor epithet indeed. The 8 originals are little more than works in progress, a long way from being ready for vinyl. Lone bright spots: The covers of the Stooges "1970" and Pere Ubu's "Heart of Darkness."

4. The Volcano Suns' THE BRIGHT ORANGE YEARS is a better Burma record than the Burma record. Comparison are inevitable but this one is at least justified, since the Suns are former Burma drummer Peter Prescott's baby. This is an album of relentless postpunk, full of passion, anger and wit. "Cornfield," "Jak," "Silverstone," and "The Mouth That Roared" have the same anthemic qualities as Burma greats like "Revolver" and "Academy Fight Song." But while Prescott and the band are mining similar turf, they are not just a Burma clone band; and there is enough here to suggest that the Suns' will be a combo to watch in their own right (providing Prescott doesn't keep overhauling the personnel).

5. Prescott is erupting with Volcano Suns. Roger Miller and Martin Swope are whistling Birdsongs of The Mesozoic, but the \$64,000 question is: Whatever happened to Clint Conley? I'm waiting for the last word about Mission of Burma to come from the man I always considered its secret weapon.

# Burma Shave



## Attacker

#### ATTACKER

Battle At Helm's Deep, LP  
Metal Blade Records

This may be a lefthanded compliment - 'cos I sure underestimated these guys in the past - but this is one amazingly impressive record from these Hoboken metalheads. The guitars rip, the drums are fiercesome, the vocals wail - but that ain't the half of it. The lyrics read like a game of Dungeons & Dragons, taking you on a journey through a Tolkienesque, medieval landscape of hobbits and warlocks, wizards and warriors, culminating in the 'Battle At Helm's Deep' where good and evil vie for supremacy. The songs include extended musical themes which repeat, like the score of a rock opera, and the whole record works to create the illusion that there's a story being told, even though the lyrics don't really follow any kind of plot. There's only one bummer, a "Rock All Night" kinda song that must date back to Attacker's start as a high school party band; it's not a bad tune but it ruins the effect the rest of the album builds up. Attacker should find someone to bankroll them; there's a couple of wild videos in these rockin' toons.

- 'Metal' Mike Ferris

#### LATE LISTINGS

YUK  
24 Franklin St.  
Morristown NJ 07960 (50¢)

ATTITUDE  
c/o Cary Brief  
20 Brandon Ave.  
Livingston NJ 07039 (\$1)

SPATS  
Box 2235  
Wayne NJ 07470 (\$1)

CANCER  
c/o Brian Shapiro  
4222 Nagle Ave.  
Fairlawn NJ 07410 (50¢)

STRAIGHT LIFE  
25 Collinwood Ave.  
Maplewood, NJ 07040 (50¢)

GRIN SNIP  
12 Longacre Dr.  
Livingston NJ 07039

SLAG MAG  
9 Park Circle  
Short Hills, NJ 07078

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# on the outside

by bruce  
gallanter



## ANIMATION

Loud Day, 5-song EP

On rare occasions, a classic recording of an obscure NJ band will get by us here at Jersey Beat; but as Sun Ra sez, "You gotta give some credit where credit is due..." Last issue, you read a profile of Animation, sometimes called Suspended Animation, but last summer, they released this relatively unnoticed gem on a now-defunct South Carolina label (leading many to believe they were a Southern band). Animation hails from the affluent community of Westfield, a deceptively quiet town that's produced its fair share of pop units - the Bouncing Balls, Whirling Dervishes, the Critters back in the '60's, and even some P. Funk alumni. Yet Animation are quite special on their own. This 12" is, without a doubt, a timeless, classic pop platter. Its influences seem to draw from the Athens/Byrds school of shimmering guitars, by way of Hoboken pop coolness. It has that 60's thru 80's feeling of coming from either time. The lead vocals & harmonies are both very impassioned, with a peculiar sense of humor. The guitar and keyboards combine into a relaxing, hypnotic groove/flow, often sounding orchestral in a magic way. There's also a subtle/selective use of quiet anger, balancing the dense beauty within. Soothing, moving, and provocative, as is the record's unusually colored cover art. Originally released by South Carolina's Vital Records, the EP is available at Cheap Thrills in New Brunswick, or by mail from Animation c/o Gregg, 800 Forest Ave. #12-C, Westfield, NJ 07090.

## ON THE OUTSIDE

Many of you have been asking about my next alternative music fest, and hence, it is currently in the planning stages. With the terms 'psychedelic' and 'garage' both somewhat overused & abused, I felt that the next fest should show what this music is really about; not on a superficial level, either. After having to sit through some of the worst offenders of this genre - the Selves, Nightmares, Mosquitos, & Naked Prey - the time has come to show the true diversity of this still-special music. Bands I am considering include the New Young Turks, Smithereens, Lord John, Animation, Frozen Concentrate, and possibly a Feelies offshoot. Don't get me wrong, I am not implying that any of these bands are completely 'psychedelic,' just that they do employ some of the more interesting ideas found in this genre. Since most of the aforementioned bands are from the New Brunswick area, perhaps we can find a location in that vicinity...if not, maybe we could do it again in Rahway. Any ideas, contact me... number below.

Commencing Sept. 26 and for every Thursday thereafter, I am booking bands at the Downey O'Sullivan Pub on Bayway Ave. in Elizabeth. This nice-looking, spacious bar is upstairs from the Underground Lounge where I booked talent for about 6 mos. in '84. There is no PA right now but we will be renting one for shows. Bands will be playing for the door and a small percentage of the bar. I would like this series to be as diverse as possible, with all-original rock, R&B, blues, soul, bluegrass, and whatever other socially oriented music I can find. Upcoming bands include Stickshift Cadillac, Animation, Louie Louie, and Froz.Con. in November. Interested bands can contact me at work, (201) 232-9401. Try between 2-5 p.m.

My good buddy Paul Decolator is still trying to put together local hardcore gigs and having a hard time finding a hall. Since many of Jersey's better punk bands are now boycotting City Gardens, this is needed more than ever. Paul & I are now looking for a farm/hall type of place away from the city and complaining neighbors. If you have any suggestions, contact Paul at 828-0062 or myself at the number above.

# Swingin' Singles

BY  
JIM  
TESTA

## THE STEFFORD HUSBANDS

"Seeing Is Believing"/"I'm Rode Out"  
Cryptovision Records

A short groovy blast of garagemania from the enigmatic Stepfords. The A side is a "You're Gonna Miss Me" 4-chord stomper, the B-side a bit smoother, much in the same vein as the Cheepskates' classic "Take It Easy." A good 'un.

## DEATH OF SAMANTHA

"Amphetamine"/"Simple As That"

St. Valentine, Box 79116, Cleveland, OH 44107  
Thinking man's garage rock, kinda like a cross between Human Switchboard and early Dream Syndicate. "Amphetamine" is the moody Velvets-influenced one, the B-side is just pure GREAT, though, lively and original and the perfect indie 45: it just makes me want to hear lots more from this combo.

## THE CYNICS

"Painted My Heart"/"Sweet Young Thing"  
Dionysus, Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91507

"SYT" is the purest early Stones ripoff I've heard in ages, cloned from '19th Nervous Breakdown' or something from that era. The A side is more original, great lyrics, and a lot less primitive than something you'd expect from this Bomp-distributed label.

## FLYING COLORS

"Look My Way"/"Dear Friend"  
Cryptovision

Great new combo outta San Francisco. The first side soars in neo-psychedelic splendor like the late, great Plimsouls, and that's heady praise indeed! The flip's more power-pop. A real treat - tuneful, great harmonies, well-produced.

## INVISIBLE PARTY

"A Hundred"/"Big Man's Daughter"

Jargon, 26 Sidney St., Rochester NY 14609  
I like everything about this band - the sound of Stan Merrill's lead vocals, the catchy songs, the crisp guitar lines. The nod goes to "A 100" for the better lyric but both sides of this 45 bear checking out. Rochester, huh? Wonder if they ever tour?

## ROCKIN' ROLLO'S END OF SUMMER

### LIVE MUSIC AWARDS

### HOTTEST PUNK/NOISE GIGS

1. DETOX - Showplace, 9/7
2. SONIC YOUTH - CBGB, 5/24  
Folk City, 6/12
3. BIG BLACK, Pep, 7/5  
Maxwells, 7/7
4. APPLICANCES FSB - Maxwells, 8/15
5. KILLDOZER - Folk City, 6/12
6. FRIGHTWIG - Jetty, 7/16

### BEST OBSCURE LIVE ACTS

1. POLKAHOLICS - CBGB, 6/11
2. OUTNUMBERED - Jetty, 5/28
3. MYRA HOLDER GROUP - Folk City, 9/11
4. SCRUFFY THE CAT - Maxwells, 7/4
5. MIRACLE LEGION - Maxwells, 6/1
6. FLOOR KISS - Jetty, 9/3



Before we get to this issue's tapes, a note about this column: Basically we are dealing with two kinds of cassette releases, demos and indie cassettes. The demos are generally the result of a band's first venture into the studio, released to garner attention, gigs, and maybe a record deal (ha!), but are not generally meant for mass consumption. The indie tapes are do-it-yourself releases from bands, often for sale to the public. Frequently, these releases eventually wind up on vinyl. Where applicable, we'll list names & addresses so you can order tapes that sound interesting.

Ray Mason's LOVE WALK is such an indie release, a followup to his LET'S CAPTIVATE A PLANET, reviewed a few columns back. Mason plays simple, guitar-based pop songs with obvious roots (notably Lennon, Neil Young, and the Byrds), but as he sez on the liner notes, "If you're gonna steal it, why not steal from the best?" Why not? And while you're at it, send for this tape [235 South St., Northampton, MA 01060].

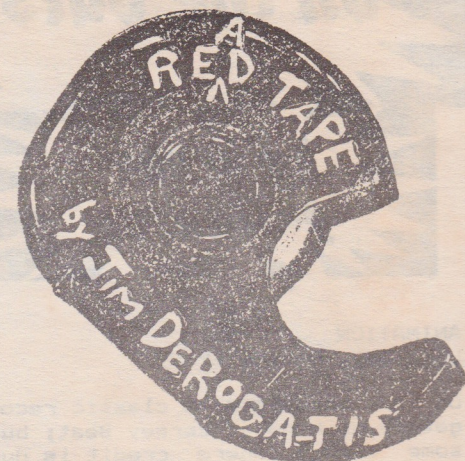
Moving back to the demo category, we have a 3-song offering from RADICAL INNOCENCE. "Cathy's Double" and "Positive Reaction" are bogus suburban reggae and "Living In A Dream" sounds like Jethro Tull (!!!). Talk about bands with identity crises!

There's no such problem with KURT RALSKE on his 6-song demo tape of electronic music. Ralske's songs, mostly instrumental, are evocative and captivating with inventive use of synths and drum machine, as well as acoustic and electric guitars. Tangerine Dream lives!

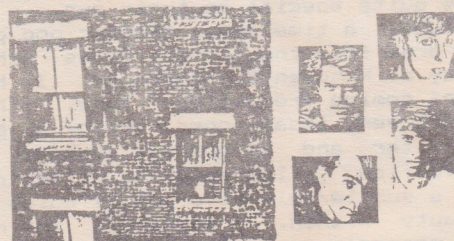
Bruce Gallanter reviewed Zero here a while back, but since their 4-song demo is new to me, a few words: For the most part, this is straightahead pop with appealing vocals and some killer hooks. The songs sometimes veer too closely to Journey/Toto slickness, but "The Time Is Now" and "Science Fiction" are quirky enough to make me want to hear more.

Unfortunately, that can't be said for LEAP OF FAITH, whose 6-song tape is a pre-release version of their Hot & Sour Records EP (which should be out by the time you read this). These songs are predictable, tepid R.E.M. ripoffs without that band's drive, energy, or melodic sense. (Can't these bands find another role model?) There is barely a hook to be found in the five originals, and the mangled version of the Modern Lovers' "Someone I Care About" is just as annoying. Two of Leap Of Faith's songs sum it up: "Mercy" (they should have had some for their listeners) and "I Must Be Joking" (they are, they are).

Finally, in the Best For Last Dept., we have the 6-song "Toilet Humors" tape from PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH, whose songs roar away in the best noise-filled fury of Sonic Youth or the Minutemen. This stuff is sure to get the adrenalin going, but along with the awesome speed/volume, there is also some witty wordplay (fave songtitle: "Valley of the Gwangi") and imaginative musicianship (these guys have chops!).



## LEAP OF FAITH



ELLIOT SHARP  
Carbon, LP  
Atonal import

The problem with much contemporary post-punk avant-garde music as I see it is not so much a question of validity of a particular field of sonic and/or conceptual terrain ventured 'pon as the fashion in which said explorations consequently relate to others.

Noise for noise's sake is a fine first step in any aspiring artist's stylistic evolution. But it ain't necessarily effectively expressive to anyone else and is probably a phase best undertaken in the privacy of one's own basement, rehearsal studio, etc. At worst, it ain't any music lovers' bound duty to subject themselves to and/or financially support such paradiddling...tho it can be fun to watch someone grow from a muddler to a master craftsman.

At no time have I ever doubted Elliot Sharp's good intentions. Up to now, tho, I haven't been much more than intrigued by his actual recorded output. All his victories have seemed conceptual, none Dionysian. Then I heard his work with Carbon on Homestead's Speed Trials compilation. That led me to seek out the album I knew had come out on Zoar a while back, and yielded a German release, Carbon.

Sharp's game plan here is simple, yea...archetypal; it's the solution to all questions of populist intent in post-rock pop music. It's got a good beat; a bunch of 'em, in fact. Carbon consists of Sharp, Lesli Dalaba on trumpet and three percussionists. The trio sends up a good polyrhythmic tumult composed from a broad spectrum of struck noises: metal, congas, snares, et. al. To dummies it'll sound like punk gamelan. What it does provide is an attractive-sounding, steadying flow for Sharp to fling an array of way-startling exclamations wrung out of guitars, reed instruments, etc. agin'. Carbon strikes that delicate balance of the familiar and accessible vs. the novel, unexpected, and arcane which is the hallmark of great rock 'n roll. Like, it's really too cool for mere words.

- Howard Wuelfing

CARBON



# LIVE ACTION

by Mike Applestein  
BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED/STATING THE OBVIOUS  
Roxly Grill, New Brunswick - 9/19/85

First of all, it's great to see some new & truly unique combos playing in New Brunswick. While there are some wonderful bands (Spiral Jetty, Lord John, etc.) around, there's been a decided lack of energy in the Hub City of late.

Batteries Not Included are only about 6 months old, and until now have confined their gigs to college pubs, benefits, etc. Lead singer/guitarist, Stevo Dockery (who resembles the classic Buddy Holly/Elvis Costello rock'n roll nerd) calls the sound "New Wave before the term became a bad word." While much of their music does have that 1980 sense of New Wave fun, it's a lot less frivolous; deeper than a lot of power pop, but much more upbeat than, say, Sonic Youth. Picture a cross between the Slickee Boys, the Ventures, and early Dingo Boingo, with forays into reggae ("The Times"), pseudo-hardcore (the show-stopping "Beat Me To A Bloody Pulp") and cool cover tunes like "Danger Man" (an obscure surf/spy number originally done by 4 Out Of 5 Doctors). But my fave is probably the WRSU hit "Camera Lies," with its bitter lyrics of infatuation and feeling distanced, plus its VERY infectious melody. Most of the tunes are written by Stevo and bassist Mark, and lead guitarist Kar-thik Swaminathan also contributes a song or two. Despite equipment problems (like staying in tune), the Batteries put on a positively invigorating show; their onstage enthusiasm is as catchy as their songs. I got a real "Charge" (sorry) out of them.

As for Stating the Obvious, they've been around a little longer and released a single earlier this year. When I saw them live in early '85, they were entertaining but a little hard to take seriously. During their six months hiatus (this was their 'return' show), however, they've progressed; boy, have they progressed! If they keep it up, at this rate they'll be one of the most interesting bands in the area.

The Stating The Obvious that played tonight resembles a lot of bands I love without imitating any of them. They've got the spare, compressed instrumentation of Oh OK, the dissonant CLANG! of the Au Pairs and the Raincoats, the relaxed and somewhat self-conscious delivery of Young Marble Giants. Lead singer Marcya has a wonderfully snotty voice and blase' stage presence; the lyrics she sings are mostly social/novelty/political statements. Guitarist Vince didn't bring his Casiotone on stage, but he's now singing more harmony with Marcya and playing more intricate guitar parts, interlocking with Tom's melodic and defined bass lines. New drummer Darryl is a definite improvement, a lot tighter than his predecessor. It's all quite hypnotic and striking without even trying, and they capped the show with one of the best-chosen covers I've ever seen, the Au Pairs' "Come Again." This band has depth and sheer individuality their single doesn't even hint at.

## A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO NEW JERSEY FANZINES

### DAINGEROUS RHYTHMS

c/o Temesey  
439 Rivercrest Dr.  
Piscataway NJ 08854 \$1  
One of the best. Lively reviews, int'ws, photos, local & nat'l. A good read.

### HARD TIMES

P.O. Box 924  
Maywood, NJ 07607 \$1  
A little more strictly hardcore-oriented than the wider-ranging DR, but still well-done, nicely printed on slick paper, a good bet.

### WRITERS BLOCK

54 Marcy St.  
Somerset, NJ 08873 50¢  
Lots of local stuff, sort of a "Son of Jersey Beat." From Livingston College students.

### MAKING TIME

131 W. Passiac St.  
Maywood NJ 07607 50¢  
Mick London's Mod & 6T's small-format zine. Fun.

### INCOGNITO

c/o Grogan, 28 Oxford Rd.  
Englishtown, NJ 07726 \$1  
6T's sounding bands, old & new, with retrospectives of old faves and new bands as well. Great graphics & original art.

### UPSTART!

c/o Collins, 200 Division Ave.  
Garfield, NJ 07026 50¢  
Scooters, mods, 6Ts bands, & Mod Fun, in that order.

### MALCONTENT

16 Nautilus Dr.  
Leonardo, NJ 07737 SASE  
Arty literary zine with beautiful custom-made covers, poetry, stories, some music.

### FARMAX

c/o Harry Baggs,  
444 Ringwood Ave.  
Manaque, NJ 07465 \$1.25  
Far to local hardcore scene, good reportage, lots of graphics, interesting visually.

### NO PLACE TO HIDE

249 Hillcrest Ave.  
Trenton NJ 08618 75¢  
Good photos, lots of good reading, mostly hardcore but some other stuff.

### SPORADIC DROOLINGS

PO Box 1092, Kearny, NJ 07032 75¢  
Interviews, photos, easy reading, mostly on local hardcore.

### SMASH APATHY

PO Box 1216, Fairlawn, NJ 07945 50¢  
Haven't seen this one yet but reportedly local hardcore coverage, well-done.

### TRASHBEAT

PO Box M42, Hoboken NJ 07030 50¢  
This trashy garage-rock zine has moved to Hoboken with a new issue due soon. Lots of fun, lots of trashy bands, fun graphics.

### ALCOHOLIC TENDENCIES

PO Box 13011, Philadelphia, PA 19101 25¢  
Xeroxed hardcore-scene coverage, kinda sloppy and not a lot of graphics or photos.

### NO DEODORANT

Box 251, Califon, NJ 07830 50¢  
Yes, more hardcore from the Garden State, another xeroxed 'zine but with some fun stories.

### FLESH & BONES

351 Beechwood Ave. Middlesex, NJ 08846 \$1

Haven't seen one of these in a while but a new issue is always an event, the best comprehensive coverage of NJ hardcore; well printed with great plx.

### HARDCORE 4 NJ

6 Heather Hill Way  
Mendham, NJ 07945 75¢  
Small format xeroxed zine with plenty of local & nat'l hardcore poop.

### STRANGER THAN FICTION

c/o Rosinski, 437 Probasco Rd.  
East Windsor, NJ 08520 \$1  
New Mod & 6Ts zine with good graphics, fun times, kinda like "Son of 99th Floor."



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